

of employment which caused their disease. This onerous requirement makes it nearly impossible for federal fire fighters, who suffer from occupational diseases, to receive fair and just compensation or retirement benefits. The bureaucratic nightmare they must endure is burdensome, unnecessary and, in many cases, overwhelming. It is ironic and unjust that the very people we call on to protect our federal interests are not afforded the very best in health care and retirement benefits our federal government has to offer.

Today, Representatives CONNIE MORELLA (R-MD), JO ANN DAVIS (R-VA), and LOIS CAPPS (D-CA) joined me to introduce bipartisan legislation, the Federal Firefighters Fairness Act of 2001, which amends the Federal Employees Compensation Act to create a presumptive disability for fire fighters who become disabled by heart and lung disease, cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma, and infectious diseases like tuberculosis and hepatitis. Disabilities related to the cancers, heart, lung and infectious diseases enumerated in this important legislation would be considered job related for purposes of workers compensation and disability retirement—entitling those affected to the health care coverage and retirement benefits they deserve.

Too frequently, the poisonous gases, toxic byproducts, asbestos, and other hazardous substances with which federal firefighters and emergency response personnel come in contact, rob them of their health, livelihood, and professional careers. The federal government should not rob them of necessary benefits.

The bipartisan effort behind the Federal Firefighters Fairness Act of 2001 marks a significant advancement for fire fighter health and safety. Federal firefighters deserve our highest commendation and it is time to do the right thing for these important federal employees.

Thirty-eight states have already enacted a similar disability presumption law for federal firefighters' counterparts working in similar capacities on the state and local levels. The Federal Firefighters Fairness Act of 2001 is about parity for federal fire fighters; the same level of support provided to other important groups, such as teachers and police officers, should also be granted to these dedicated federal employees.

Mr. Speaker, the job of fire fighting continues to be complex and dangerous. The nationwide increase in the use of hazardous materials and the recent rise in both natural and man-made disasters pose new threats to fire fighter health and safety. The Federal Fire Fighters Fairness Act of 2001 will help protect the lives of our fire fighters and it will provide them with a vehicle to secure their health and safety.

I urge my colleagues to embrace this bipartisan effort and support the Federal Firefighters Fairness Act of 2001 on behalf of our nation's federal fire fighters and emergency response personnel.

SENSATIONAL SOCCER IN THE 6TH DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, On May 26, the Sixth District of North Carolina became the

home of the 3-A state championship girls soccer team—Southwest Guilford High School. The Cowgirls completed their victory run with a season record of 24–3. After winning state championships in 1995 and 1997, the team brought the title home again when they beat T.C. Robeson 4–1.

With a team that has the Regional Player of the Year Erin Sides, All-State Player and leading goal scorer Kelly Whitaker, Conference Defender of the Year Lauren Field, and Erin Gonzalez as the All-State Stopper, Southwest Guilford had a leading advantage in capturing the 3-A state title.

The Cowgirls won all five state championship title games. The final game was a scoreless tie at halftime. But the team remained united and was ready for the second half.

"We said at halftime, whoever scored that first goal is going to win the game," sweeper Lauren Field, one of three captains, told the High Point Enterprise.

The Cowgirls' Erin Sides, scored their first goal, only two minutes into the second half. Laura Allen drilled another goal three minutes later. The final two goals that sealed the victory were by Kelly Whitaker, who was the championship game MVP.

Congratulations are in order for Head Coach Mike Fitzpatrick along with his Assistant Coach Gary Sabo, Goalkeeper Coach Chris Barrett and JV Coach Jim Coggins.

Members of the championship team included Laura Allen, Deanna Carr, Sara Crowder, Lisa Demeyer, Lauren Field, Erin Gonzalez, Natalie Henderson, Melissa Hunter, Andrea Lance, Bevan Menamara, Jolie Reed, Erin Slides, Marty Thompson, Marianne Trexler, Claire Walley, Kelly Whitaker, and Wendy Williams.

Everyone at Southwest Guilford High School can be proud of the Cowgirls. On behalf of the citizens of the Sixth District, we congratulate Athletic Director Brindon Christman, Principal Wayne Tuggle and everyone at Southwest Guilford for winning the state 3-A girls soccer championship.

INTRODUCTION OF THE AIRCRAFT CLEAN AIR ACT OF 2001

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Aircraft Clean Air Act of 2001 along with Senator DIANE FEINSTEIN who has introduced the companion bill in the Senate. This legislation is intended to create a procedure within the FAA to record cabin air quality incidents on commercial flights and to require airlines to turn over certain information regarding those complaints to the FAA.

The problem, Mr. Speaker, is that there is no way for passengers and crew members to register complaints about poor air quality they may have experienced on a commercial flight in the United States. Airlines are not required to save, or make available, valuable maintenance records of the flights where air quality problems are reported. Nor are they required to make available the chemical constituents present to which a person on the plane may be exposed. As a result, we have very little information as to the frequency or nature of cabin air quality incidents.

The Aircraft Clean Air Act of 2001 addresses this problem by allowing passengers and crew members to register cabin air quality complaints directly with the FAA. The FAA is then required to pass the complaint on to the appropriate airline, and to keep records of all complaints for ten years. Further, a passenger or crew members may request that the airline named in their complaint turn over the applicable mechanical and maintenance records of the flight in question if they have had a medical professional verify their symptoms. Airlines would have 15 days to turn over this information, after which a civil penalty of \$1,000 per day would be levied on the airline for every day they do not turn over the requested information.

The Aircraft Clean Air Act of 2001 addresses another issue as well, the level at which aircraft are pressurized in flight. Currently airplanes are pressurized at 8,000 feet while they are in the air. This means that for the duration a flight is in the air, it feels to the passengers as if they are at 8,000 feet above sea level, regardless of the actual altitude of the aircraft. The 8,000 foot standard was based on outdated research that used an unrepresentative sample of the population. Recently, there have been questions regarding the safety of the 8,000 foot level. As a person goes higher above sea level, the rate at which oxygen is absorbed into the body decreases. This could cause problems such as shortness of breath and numbness in limbs, and lead to other health related problems.

The Aircraft Clean Air Act of 2001 authorizes the FAA to sponsor a study to determine if the cabin altitude rate, as currently defined by existing government regulation, should be lowered. The study would examine the affects of altitudes between 5,000 and 8,000 feet on various types of people that broadly represent the public. The bill allows universities to compete to conduct the study, and allows the National Academy of Sciences' "Committee on Air Quality in Passenger Cabins of Commercial Aircraft" to select the winner.

Mr. Speaker, airlines should be required to record all air quality complaints from passengers and crew members and to turn over the requested maintenance information in order to insure that our airlines remain the safest in the world. This is a matter of extreme importance for the flying public as well as those who work in the industry, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

ELIMINATE PENALTY FOR IMMIGRANT CHILDREN—H.R. 1209

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1209—The Child Protection Act of 2001. Too many injustices affect immigrants as a result of how the current Immigration and Nationality Act is written. H.R. 1209 is but one way to ensure that children of citizens are not penalized because it takes the INS an unacceptable length of time to process their adjustment of status petitions.

Alien children of U.S. citizens are eligible for admission as an immediate relative. They are not subject to any numerical limitations on

visas. The only wait time for these children is the actual time the INS takes to process their petitions.

However, when these children turn 21 years of age, their status shifts from immediate relative status to the status of family-first preference. This category is subject to a limited number of visas per year.

If these children turn 21 after their immediate relative petition is filed, they are moved to the bottom of the wait list for the family-first preference category. Since this category is backlogged for many countries, the child's wait time for processing unfairly increases.

H.R. 1209 would ensure that an alien child of a U.S. citizen shall remain eligible for immediate relative status as long as an immigrant visa petition was filed before the child turned 21. The date the petition was filed, and not the date the petition is processed, shall apply.

I urge my colleagues to support this piece of legislation to correct this inequitable outcome.

IRRELEVANT WEEK 26TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CHRISTOPHER COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate an unusual community event that takes place in my district each year. "Irrelevant Week," now being celebrated for the 26th year in a row, was the vision of former National Football League player Paul Salata.

Founded on the premise of "doing something nice for someone for no reason," Irrelevant Week has inspired generous acts that have made this popular event one of the most relevant altruistic programs held in Orange County. The honoree of the week is, by tradition, the person chosen last in the National Football League draft. Whether first or last in the NFL draft, Paul Salata knows that beyond pure talent, it is the character and drive of the player—even if the last one picked—that will determine how successful he will be on the field. Proceeds from the week's events are donated to charities in Southern California, including this year's beneficiaries: the Orange County Youth Sports Foundation and Save Our Youth.

This year's honoree is future Arizona Cardinal Tevita Ofahengau. He was the 246th pick in the NFL draft this year. Born in Tonga and raised in Laie, Hawaii, he is a 6'2" 251-pound tight end from Brigham Young University.

Tevita, along with his wife and four children, will undoubtedly enjoy celebrating his reign as "Mr. Irrelevant" during the week's festivities. On behalf of the United States Congress and the people of Orange County whom it is my privilege to represent, congratulations to Tevita, his family, Paul Salata, and everyone associated with Irrelevant Week XXVI.

HONORING HOWARD SCHARLIN

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man who will be greatly missed by all

who knew him. A man who served his country proudly in its hour of need, and a man whose love for his work and his life are only eclipsed by his immeasurable love of family. It brings me great sadness to report that Howard Scharlin of Coconut Grove, Florida, passed away last Tuesday at the age of 73.

Howard Scharlin attended school at Brooklyn College and later at Brooklyn Law School. He was admitted to the New York State Bar Association in 1951. Before entering the practice of law, he joined the Navy and attended Officers Training School from which he eventually became a line officer on the *Battleship Wisconsin*. It was on the *Wisconsin* where Howard began service to his country during the Korean War.

After the war, Howard Scharlin moved to Miami in 1955. It was in Florida that he began his legal career as a real estate attorney and also a real estate developer. As a developer, Howard used his intellect and creativity to play a great role in the development of the City of Hialeah. Other accomplishments in the field include the co-creation of Palm Springs Mile, the creation of Anchorage Way and Commodore Plaza, and more notably, the development of the first townhouses in Florida and the laws creating condominiums.

However, Howard may best be known for his intense involvement in community service and his most generous philanthropy. He was a major supporter of the Boys and Girls Club, the United Way, and a myriad of Arts associations both in Florida and Aspen Colorado, where his family spent a considerable amount of time. He showed a great interest in educational institutions as well, as he was on the Board of Trustees for the Coconut Grove Playhouse and the Ransom Everglades School, as well as endowing the I Have a Dream Foundation at the Drew Elementary School.

In addition, Howard was an outstanding member of the Jewish community and a passionate supporter of the State of Israel. He was a board member on the American Jewish Committee, board member and Past President of the Miami Jewish Federation, President of the local chapter of AIPAC, participant in a number of missions to Israel, influential member on the boards of several Temples, and a number of other organizations.

Mr. Speaker, Howard Scharlin was both well-loved and widely respected by all those blessed to have known him, especially his wife, three children, and six grandchildren by whom he is survived. He selflessly served his country. His life's work was his dream. And his family was a source of admiration and great pride. Today we celebrate Howard's life which serves as a wonderful example to all who follow in his footsteps.

TRIBUTE TO MR. FRED WENGER

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of the late Mr. Fred Wenger, an outstanding citizen and dedicated community leader in Delaware County, Indiana for three decades. I join his lovely wife Karen and three children in expressing gratitude for his loyal service as an Indiana State Representative.

Mr. Speaker, ask everyone in the Indiana General Assembly about the legacy of Mr. Wenger and they will unanimously refer to his gentle soul. He was dedicated to building strong constituent relationships and stronger Christian values.

Mr. Wenger's powerful faith influenced all of his work at the State House. He routinely voted his conscience for each of his three years in office. His passion for public service made him an inspiration to all of his colleagues. He is not only deeply regarded, but also deeply loved.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this respected man who helped make selected communities of east central Indiana the pleasant places they are today. Indiana will miss Mr. Fred Wenger.

INTERNET FREEDOM AND BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACT OF 2001

HON. TOM SAWYER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. SAWYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1542, the Internet Freedom and Broadband Deployment Act of 2001. While this bill is controversial, I believe that it is fundamentally headed in the right direction. In fact, I authored an amendment to this bill to assure that, if the Bell Operating Companies receive relief to deliver high-speed Internet services, they would be required to deliver Internet services to underserved areas.

The bill would free the Bells of regulation to compete freely with long-distance providers and cable companies for high-speed Internet services. Of course, those companies which are already unregulated in providing high-speed Internet services oppose putting the Bells on an equal playing field.

I am less interested in the great turf wars among competitors than I am in how fair competition benefits the consumer, and whether technical advances—especially high speed Internet services, or broadband—will be made available across America.

Broadband access, along with the content and services it might enable, has the potential to transform the Internet—both what it offers and how it is used. For example, a two-way high speed broadband connection could be used for interactive applications such as online classrooms, showrooms, or health clinics, where teacher and student (or customer and salesperson, doctor and patient) could see and hear each other through their computers. An "always on" connection could be used to monitor home security, home automation, or even patient health remotely through the Internet.

The high speed and high volume that broadband offers could also be used for bundled service where, for example, cable television, video on demand, voice, data, and other services are all offered over a single line. In truth, many of the applications that will best exploit the technological capabilities of broadband, while also capturing the imagination of consumers, have yet to be developed.

My amendment, which was adopted by the House Committee, requires the Bells to make